

If you can get a country like China to change its legal system, even if the leading edge issue is commercial, it's in the system of law that protecting commercial rights and protecting rights of free speech and citizenship tend to merge. And one of the things that I would like to see over the long run is that I would like to see us move to the next step where China moves from reassessing its position on this or that or the other political dissident from time-to-time and releases them, to the point where we have a systematic change in the way people are treated. I think that should be our long-term goal.

Those things won't make as many headlines, but they will change more lives. So I would expect there to be some advances in this whole rule of law cooperation we've been doing. And if we show progress in all these areas, I think the trip will be very much worthwhile. What I'm trying to do is to have—I don't mean to say—I think symbols are important, actually, but I think it's important that in the end what matters is results. Are lives changed for the better? Is the direction of the country better over the long run?

This is a difficult trip because of the differences between us, but it's also an important trip because of our common interests and because so much is at stake. It seems to me that the chances of doing good for the American people and for the stability of the world far outweigh the dealing with the difficulties presented by the trip.

I've seen the Chinese work with us, for example, with great reliability—I could just mention a few things—on the non-proliferation treaty, the comprehensive test ban, the chemical weapons treaty, the observing most of the Missile Technology Control Regime's requirements, stopping cooperation with Pakistan and Iran on a lot of their nuclear programs, other programs. It's not—they've been very good allies in many of these areas.

They gave great leadership to our meeting the other day on the Permanent Five statement on the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests. And I think if you look at the areas where we've made progress, they make the argument for a continued, disciplined engagement where we try to advance our interests, but we never pretend that our interests

are only security issues or our issues are only economic issues where we merge our human rights and our political concerns with these other matters. And we just pursue the whole agenda, and we do the best we can. I think it will produce more results than any available alternative.

Q. A strong speech at Tiananmen? A strong speech at Peking University?

The President. There is no speech at—

Q. Oh, there is no speech at Tiananmen?

The President. At the arrival ceremony, which is—well, you know where it is, right off Tiananmen Square. There is no speech, it is just—you know, and by the way, the United States is the only country that I'm aware of where we have little remarks at the arrival ceremony.

Every country I go to, it is the same thing. I get out; you go through the ritual; and then you go in and begin your meetings. But I will say what I have to say in other forums.

Q. Thank you very much, Mr. President. We appreciate your time.

The President. I enjoyed it.

Q. And we hope you will wear this hat.

The President. I love this hat. It's quite pretty.

Q. Hey, you look good in it.

The President. Thank you very, very much.

NOTE: The interview was taped at approximately 10:20 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for later broadcast and was embargoed by the Office of the Press Secretary until 3 p.m. In his remarks, the President referred to President Jiang Zemin of China; and freed Chinese dissident Wang Dan. The journalists who conducted the interview were Arin Basu, Feng Xiao Ming, and Patricia Hindman. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement Announcing the Benchmarking Process in Federal Procurement

June 24, 1998

Today I am pleased to announce policies that continue my commitment to expand economic opportunity for all Americans. These new guidelines for Federal procurement are designed to remedy discrimination

in a carefully targeted way. These reforms, which continue my promise to mend, not end affirmative action, expand opportunities for small disadvantaged businesses.

These new guidelines allow small disadvantaged businesses to receive a price credit of up to 10 percent in bidding for Federal contracts. The credits will be available only in industries that show the ongoing effects of discrimination. The Department of Commerce identified these industries through a process called benchmarking, which compares the actual share of Federal procurement by small disadvantaged firms to the share that would be expected in the absence of discrimination. Limiting credits to these industries satisfies constitutional requirements while targeting our efforts in areas where disparities still exist.

This program is based on authority given the administration by Congress in 1994. These credits will help level the playing field for firms that have suffered from discrimination. However, they do not ensure that any firm will win a contract. Small disadvantaged businesses must compete with all other businesses to win Federal contracts.

The steps we are taking today comply with legal requirements and preserve competition, while serving to remedy discrimination.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on the Proposed "Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1998"

June 24, 1998

Dear _____:

I am writing to urge the Senate (House) to act quickly this year to pass the Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 1998. This crucial legislation would expand the ability of the Justice Department to prosecute hate crimes by removing needless jurisdictional requirements for existing crimes and by giving Federal prosecutors the power to prosecute hate crimes committed because of the victim's sexual orientation, gender, or disability.

As you know, there have been a number of recent tragedies across our country that involve hate crimes. I know you were as troubled as I was by the vicious murder in Jasper, Texas, just two weeks ago. This shocking

event focused America's attention on the problem of hate crimes. I hope we can join together to reaffirm that no American should be subjected to violence on account of his or her race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or disability.

Whether it is a gay American murdered as he walks home from work or a Jewish American whose synagogue is desecrated by swastikas, such acts are not only examples of bias and bigotry—they are crimes. They strike at the heart of what it means to be an American and at the values that define us as a Nation. That is why I believe now is the time for us to take strong and decisive action to fight hate crimes.

There is nothing more important to the future of this country than our standing together against intolerance, prejudice, and violent bigotry. The Hate Crimes Prevention Act will lead the way in making all Americans more safe and secure. I implore you to move this vital piece of legislation through the Senate (House) without delay.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to Newt Gingrich, Speaker of the House of Representatives; Trent Lott, Senate majority leader; Thomas A. Daschle, Senate minority leader; and Richard A. Gephardt, House minority leader. An original was not available for verification of the contents of this letter.

Letter to Congressional Leaders Transmitting a Report on Peacekeeping Operations

June 24, 1998

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am pleased to transmit herewith the 1997 Annual Report to the Congress on Peacekeeping. The report is required by section 407(d) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 (Public Law 103-236).

The report provides an account of how the United States used peacekeeping last year to promote regional stability and to advance U.S. interests. Our support for United Nations and other peacekeeping operations allowed us to protect our interests before they